

March 29, 2013

News Release

For Immediate Release

Help Plant Trees at Wilson's Creek

Volunteers will plant trees April 5-6 in a section of Wilson's Creek, just north of the Springfield Southwest Wastewater Treatment Plant. It's part of an effort to restore the riparian corridor and when complete the project will restore approximately two miles of stream bank and the adjoining corridor, to a more natural state.

The restored landscape will provide water quality benefits for Wilson's Creek and ultimately the James River. Thousands of trees will be planted and the esthetic and water quality benefits will be enjoyed for generations.

The riparian corridor restoration is possible through a partnership between the City of Springfield, Ozark Greenways, the Missouri Department of Conservation and the James River Basin Partnership. The land is owned by the City of Springfield and will eventually host a portion of the Greenways Trail system.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7 through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, has provided partial funding for this project under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act. The grant focuses on restoration and protection of selected riparian areas in the James River Basin.

A riparian corridor is an area of land adjacent to a water body. Adequate and undisturbed vegetation in the corridor area is important to stabilize the banks, provide erosion control, filter pollutants, slow the velocity of water entering the stream, and offer temperature stabilization. When stream banks are bare of vegetation there are no roots to hold the soil in place and take up pollutants.

To accomplish the project goals 126 larger trees and nearly 7,000 seedlings will be planted both in the eroded bank areas and extending to 100 feet on either side of the stream.

The project includes a new fence that excludes cattle from the riparian area, the initial planting of 126 larger trees and a large volunteer effort to plant 7,000 seedlings. Care and maintenance of the trees will be provided by the city.

"The benefits of a healthy riparian corridor to streams are well documented and these corridors are crucial to stream health and water quality," said Joe Pitts, Executive Director of the James River Basin Partnership. "This project will provide long-term benefits to Springfield and the James River."

The extraordinary response and support from volunteers demonstrates that members of the Springfield community understand and appreciate the high quality of area streams, springs, rivers and lakes. All project partners are pleased to be a part of this worthwhile project.

For more information, contact: Joe Pitts at the James River Basin Partnership at 417-836-8878 or Ozark Greenways at 417-864-2014.